

do not come under the Geneva Convention either.

So you start to stretch. You say, okay, terrorists are not active combatants in Afghanistan, or because they are terrorists and not under any state, but then you move that to Iraq and say, well, maybe the same thing is true of the Iraqis, even though it is a very different situation because we invaded Iraq.

Then you start to say, well, then, maybe you do not need the Geneva Convention, it does not apply to the situation. And that is the danger here; it is sort of unilateral philosophy arrogance, not willing to listen to others that gradually erodes the notion that you have treaty obligations or that you have to succumb to some sort of international agreement or international body like the U.N. And it is such a dangerous thing, it is really such a dangerous thing.

I do not usually compliment him because I think that for the most part his conduct has not been good, but I remember there were some newspaper reports that when the Secretary of State Colin Powell heard that there were some suggestions that the Geneva Convention did not have to be adhered to, he was outraged. I think that was in part because he had, as a general and as someone who had been instructed in the norms of war, realized that you could not say that the Geneva Convention did not apply in this situation in Iraq.

But I think some of the soldiers or some of the people in charge were convinced that somehow it did not apply; and that is the danger that we face. It is such a dangerous situation because once the norms of the Geneva Convention are not applied by us, then how can we expect anybody to apply them to us? The whole breakdown in any kind of legality during the war, I mean it is just an awful thing.

I yield back to the gentlewoman.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Mr. Speaker, let me just say that you have absolutely, if you will, clarified again or made it understandable from what happens to us. And the Secretary of State, obviously, as a general, has served in that capacity, but more importantly, a combat officer, seen combat and knows what it is to be in combat and to rely upon the ability of the convention to set the standards for treatment for anyone who becomes a prisoner of war.

That is why, if I may go back again to Iraq, why I think it is such a disservice of this House not to have an investigation to begin to reset the standards and have oversight over those who are carrying out orders.

We know that General Miller, or Colonel Miller, I am not sure of the title, that used to be over Guantanamo Bay, with certain procedures that were questionable, then transferred over to Iraq. The question is, how do you figure that out? How do you determine that you either improve that or find the basis of those actions or the basis

of those actions. Why do I not correct myself and say we should be changing those actions?

So it warrants us understanding that this is not a question of who is in charge, but it is more a question of doing the right thing.

That is what we are suggesting, that we are not doing the right thing here, and frankly, it does not do us well not to be doing the right thing. And, as well, we are being seen as a body that is not either conversant with the law or desirous of adhering to the law.

You made a very good point earlier that I wanted to focus on. How interesting it is that we are now seeking the support and collaboration of the United Nations. I think we need to be more vigorous in seeking that support, but I wish we had had that support, really, way back in the fall of 2002. We might have had a much better success story.

Again, as we approach Memorial Day, I want to be very clear and I know the distinguished gentlemen's commitment to the military, that we understand who is on the front lines. We understand the mourning families who will be remembering their loved ones, fresh in their minds, lost in Afghanistan and Iraq, and those who were lost in earlier wars, and we understand the sacrifice that they have made.

We understand the wounded who are now in various hospitals or rehabilitation centers or those who are now home with their families mending. We know their lives have been altered forever.

So I certainly stand here with my colleague to pay tribute to them as we leave for this Memorial Day work recess.

This is not the question that we are debating tonight, because I hope that they fully appreciate our desire to honor them. The moment of silence today was more than appropriate and the honoring of Armed Services Day. I think that those who wear that uniform know full well that we are honoring them or they are honored more by the integrity of their service.

So I hope that that is what is understood by the distinguished gentleman's remarks tonight, as I perceive them to be, and I am grateful that he has allowed me to join with him to hopefully set some kind of tone for when we return back that we are not enemies here in this place. We should be working together for the betterment of America and for the betterment of the world. We are not enemies.

I am gratified to have been able to be part of the gentleman's discourse this evening and maybe we will come back here and get to work and establish a foreign policy and a health care policy and an energy policy that will be befitting of the Founding Fathers of this place.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I do not want to add to the gentlewoman's comments because I think they are very appropriate for ending this special order tonight, and I thank the gentlewoman for being here.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment Concurrent Resolutions of the House of the following titles:

H. Con. Res. 420. Concurrent Resolution applauding the men and women who keep America moving and recognizing National Transportation Week.

H. Con. Res. 424. Concurrent Resolution honoring past and current members of the Armed Forces of the United States and encouraging Americans to wear red poppies on Memorial Day.

H. Con. Res. 432. Concurrent Resolution providing for a conditional adjournment of the House of Representatives and a conditional recess or adjournment of the Senate.

#### YES, WE ARE BETTER OFF NOW THAN WE WERE FOUR YEARS AGO

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. TIAHRT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, lately, in a rare turn of events, House Democrats have adopted the old adage of Republican leaders and, in floor communications, they have posed the famous question from Reagan, Are you better off than you were 4 years ago?

Well, when the quote came, I think Democrats have found a moment of despair. We will welcome their call for comparison of today's economic, international and domestic status to that of 4 years. Yes, we are better off now.

Just look at the war on terror. The attacks on September 11 awakened the Nation to the threat of terror. Republicans have a clear strategy to keep Americans safe and to spread freedom and peace throughout the world.

In the past 3 years, we have seen great progress. Afghanistan is free, Libya is now disarmed, Saddam Hussein is no longer in power. Iraq is becoming a free country, making the heart of the Middle East more stable and America more secure.

The Republican-controlled House quickly passed legislation creating the Department of Homeland Security in 2002. All border activity has been consolidated into the Department of Homeland Security, a single agency, doing away with the fallible INS, or Immigration and Naturalization Service, that allowed the September 11 hijackers to slip through our borders, rent apartments, find employment and train in flight schools, only to have their visas approved by INS after they carried out attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon.

The Department of Homeland Security is implementing background checks on 100 percent of applications for U.S. citizenship and has registered over 1.5 million travelers into the United States VISIT program.

Over 500,000 first responders have been trained in weapons of mass destruction, awareness and response since September 11, 2001.